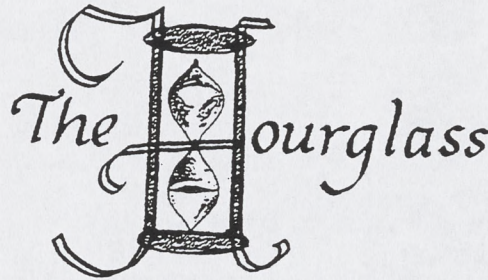


Historical Society of Palm Desert

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Community
Service
Collections
Archives

FALL/WINTER 1998

VOL. 6, NO. 3

ANNUAL MEETING, DESERT FALLS COUNTRY CLUB JEAN HOLLENBECK, PRESIDING, OCTOBER 28, 1998

Jean greeted members and guests, graciously, as always, and conducted a brief business session. Motions from the floor dispensed with approval of minutes and reports. Among dignitaries present were Palm Desert's Mayor Jean Benson and Pat Wilson, wife of our 4th District Supervisor. Anita Carey, new Office Manager at the Society, was introduced to the group. Ginny Folkers received the "Volunteer of the Year" award for her faithful service. She filled the position of Secretary on the Board for two terms and has done an outstanding job in organizing the archives.

Business members were recognized with plaques. Jean welcomed two new business members:

- The Patio Place USA, Inc. = owned by Ron and Evetta Bock
- Rover Installation & Acoustic = owned by Hal & Angie Rover

Also, a plaque was awarded to a consistent supporter with our thanks:

- Pomona First Federal Bank & Trust = Janet Cook, Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager, was present to receive the plaque.

Jean also outlined plans for a number of projects:

- doing more Oral Histories
- compiling a Society membership directory
- putting brass plaques on early businesses and buildings. Edith Morre has offered to help identify -- her business was one of the first on El Paseo, constructed in 1952.
- involving more college students. Jenny Donoho, student at COD working toward an archaeology major, was introduced and thanked for help she already is giving in various aspects of Society work.

Note: There is a new video for sale at the Society office.

Many thanks to Mary Safe, who did a wonderful job of chairing the luncheon. It was good to see so many supporters in attendance. All three of our Honorary Board Members were there, Marian Henderson, Rheo Lawman and Florence Maxwell. Opal Munster, who was with Marian, informs us that she will be moving to Fullerton she will certainly be missed by the many people who know her. Rheo was with her niece, Bonnie Bowie, who's back on our board, hooray! Florence was with her good friend, Marian Miller. Florence's granddaughter, Gena, flew in recently from Paris when her grandmother was hospitalized for a few days of tests. Lookin' good, Florence. Among other in attendance: Velma Dawson, Del & Lucy Davitt, Walt Snyder, Del Sharbutt, Edith Morre, Gladys Jaeger, Celia Dunn, Ann Bonesteel, Helene & Burwell Smith.

In conjunction with Palm Desert's 25th anniversary celebration please note that there will be an Open House at Society headquarters, the old fire station, 72-861 El Paseo, on Saturday, November 21st refreshments, displays, and good conversation 'til 4 p.m. or as long as you linger. Also, please phone City Hall before 5 p.m. on Friday, November 13, for free tickets to the barbecue being offered in conjunction with the big Silver Anniversary Celebration at Civic Center Park from noon to 7 p.m. on Sunday, November 22.

IN MEMORIAM

Ottillie "Dolly" Olesen Veloma Baer Waldron Irma Wise Marshall Edward L. Benson

Welcome to New Members

Robert D. Wilmeth, Jr. Jean B. Krauss Abel, Krieger & Wilmeth, CPAs - already a business member

INSTALLATION REPORT – THEDA LUNDQUIST

Your Hourglass editor was the installing officer, and I was ably assisted by Doloris Driskel and Mary Safe. We tried to achieve a balance of levity, gravity and dispatch in the proceedings. When an interesting speaker like Pat Laflin is the treat in store, timing is of the essence to move the business along.

LEVITY – a basket arrangement of Cookies by Design was utilized to give each inductee a cookie decorated with name, title and symbol of office.

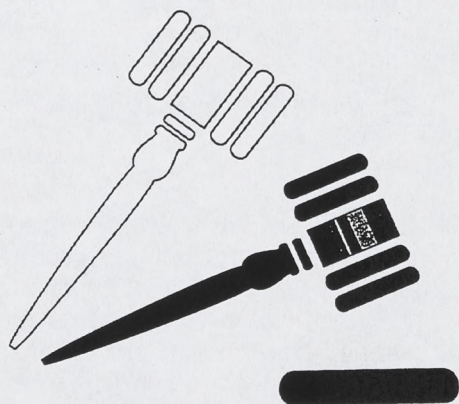
GRAVITY – each new member and officer of the Board received a specific charge as to duties of his/her position. Passages of the Board Manual were cited to encourage teamwork and commitment. Emphasis was placed on *BEING AN ADVOCATE*. Enthusiastic belief in the work and the purposes of our Historical Society is what kindles the support we need from others in the community. Not only board people, but every member of our Society can help by being an advocate. Please be one.

DISPATCH – comments made about the Board as they assembled were the briefest of oral "snapshots." Past accomplishments and volunteer services of this group would fill volumes. Working together will create future successes and fill in details of the big picture.

Doloris Driskel topped the ceremonies, if anything so much fun can be called ceremonial. From Fire Department Battalion Chief, John Rios, she had negotiated the loan of his very own fireman's hat. With this hat and a heartfelt tribute to Dan and BJ Callahan, she placed the hat on Dan's head and proclaimed him new Chief at the Old Fire Station. Thus, figuratively, was the gavel passed.

Two gifts were given to Jean Hollenbeck in appreciation for all she has done as president. On behalf of the Board, President Dan Callahan presented an engraved lucite gavel; and Doloris Driskel had a fun gift, beautifully wrapped. The box contained a candle featuring a fire house dog. Isn't it interesting how so many things we do carry the fire station identity?

The new board received warm applause from the gathering and we think we turned the program over with everyone awake and receptive to hear about Pat Laflin's soon-to-be-published book, "The Coachella Valley – A Pictorial History."



Officers for 2-year terms:

President	Dan Callahan
Vice-President	Roger Keezer
Past-President	Jean Hollenbeck
Treasurer	Bob Wilmeth

Board Members for 4-year terms:

Caroline Berkey	Joyce White	Gary Olesen
Bruce Hagerman	Ginny Mullins	Ginny Folkers

Current Board Members:

Doloris Driskel	Theda Lundquist	Mary Safe
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Appointed to fill a 2-year vacancy:

Bonnie Bowie

Off the Scanner:

* Holly and Jean Hollenbeck spent a week in Indiana enjoying the crisp air and leaves beginning to turn. They visited daughter Ann and her husband Mike. The guys even had a couple of days of fishing made a great "break-cation!"

* Roger and Maria Keezer hiked in the Mammoth Lakes area during the summer.... their second ascent of Mt. Whitney. In spite of rain, cold, and howling wind, they bettered their time of 12 hours by 15 minutes.

* Carl and Mary Safe attended a wedding in Salem, then traveled to Mount St. Helens to see how it looked since it blew its top in 1980. Apparently lots of people have had the same idea....in 1997 they finished a \$10.5 million center next to the volcano for observers.

* Dick & Ginny Folkers jumped from the frying pan into the fire. San Antonio had great museums but was extremely hot. Michigan, Toronto, Sacramento, San Jose and Santa Barbara were all having a heat wave.

City of Palm Desert – 25 years old: from 1973 to 1998.....

Budget: \$241,266 to \$25.3 million Population: 10,100 to 34,904 Employees: 13 to 119
Assessed Value: \$49 million to \$5.3 billion Sales Tax: \$82,089 to \$9.6 million –Bright Side 11-98

A PRIVATE EYE ON LOCAL HISTORY

Clues from books, newspapers, historical documents and on-site exploration.

Pat Laflin, an avid history buff who grew up in the gold mining country of northern California came to Coachella Valley in 1950. This was about the same time, she noted, that Palm Desert was taking shape. She remembers the Shadow Mountain Club being "all by itself."

Pat was accompanied to the lunch by her husband, Ben, son of the pioneer Laflin family, date growers in the lower valley. Pat was a teacher for many years, but she dreamed of having leisure to compile some of the history of the area.

She has authored several of the annual Periscopes published by the Coachella Valley Historical Society. For the last six years Pat has been doing research for the book "Coachella Valley - A Pictorial History", due to be published the first week of November. Newspapers dating from 1909 were a major source of information, but the "book project" generated much new material.

Unquestionably, the coming of the railroad made growth possible and largely dictated the terms of development. The first picture in the book is of the 1872 railway survey team. As the most direct route between Los Angeles and Yuma, the main line went right through the center of our valley. Wells needed to be drilled to have water for steam engines. In Mecca the wells turned out to be gushers, artesian wells, the miracle for agriculture.

Southern Pacific had a station and repair yards in Indio. A telegraph station was located at Edam Hill. When there were passengers coming from Los Angeles, a message would be sent ahead to have meals prepared by the time the train reached Indio. Likewise, in reverse, a message would be sent from Mecca when passengers were arriving from the east.

As people started to settle in the desert, infrastructure became of paramount importance. The hose from the depot was only 1000 feet long, so water mains, fire hydrants, the whole network needed for community protection developed in Mecca, Thermal, Coachella (then called Woodspur), Indio, etc., circa 1901-1902.

Pat related an amusing story of a family from Kansas who came on a "mixed train," i.e. both passengers and freight. Father had come to Coachella Valley and sent for mother and children to bring the livestock and join him in the new venture. Each day on the journey they milked the cow, gathered the eggs from the chickens, and enjoyed fresh produce as they traveled.

Separate sections of the book chronicle the development of communities which incorporated later: Indian Wells, Palm Desert and La Quinta. Palms to Pines Highway opened in the 1930s and remained unpaved for some years.

Throughout her talk, Pat stressed the courage and foresight of the pioneers. One example was that of 324 hardy souls from Cabazon to the lower valley who cast ballots in favor of formation of a water district. This happened in 1917-1918, resulting in what later became the Coachella Valley Water District.

Please get the book; it will be a good read and will grace your coffee table. Also, it will help a neighboring Society with its work and the enhancement of its museum. You may use the order form below to order your copy.

- - - - - (Order Form - cut here) - - - - -

A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY

A project of the Coachella Valley Historical Society

8-1/2" x 11" hard cover, limited edition. 192 pages, over 275 rare and historic photographs, all for the low sale price of only \$29.95 + \$2.32 sales tax! Please add \$5.00 shipping/handling charges per book, for mailing.

Please reserve _____ copies for:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Telephone No. _____

My check in the amount of \$ _____,
made payable to the Coachella Valley
Historical Society is enclosed.

Please mail check and order form to:
Coachella Valley Historical Society, Inc.
Post Office Box 595 - Indio, CA 92202
or call (760) 342-6651 for more information.

THE OLD FIRE STATION HAS A NEW CHIEF

This is a current photo of Daniel M. Callahan and the family pet, Lolli, a real live, beautiful Dalmatian.

Dan was born in Long Beach, California in 1926. He relocated from Long Beach in 1933 -- five hours after "The Big One." He subsequently lived in Hollywood, North Hollywood and Sherman Oaks prior to enlisting in the Army in 1944.

After returning from the Pacific in 1946 Dan enrolled in Ag School at UC-Davis. Upon finishing in 1950, he moved to the desert to engage in grape growing on the family's 320-acre ranch. The first ranch house on the property was built in 1939. The ranch had one mile of frontage between Country Club and Frank Sinatra Drives on the east side of then Del Sol Road, which is now Bob Hope Drive. The property was sold to Bob Hope in 1961 and is the present site of Eisenhower Medical Center, Hope Square and Rancho Mirage Country Club.

In the summer of 1950, Dan married Barbara Jean Taylor and two children were born.

Dan Jr. arrived in the summer of 1951 and Patricia Kyle followed in the fall of 1952. The family moved to the Deep Canyon area of Palm Desert in 1958. They took up residence in their present home on Palm Shadow Drive in 1966, which was east Palm Desert, later becoming the City of Indian Wells.

When their third child was born in 1966, the news item read "Timothy Michael Callahan, whose family resides on Palm Shadow Drive in Palm Desert, was born on Palm Sunday." Tim became the first "native" to register to vote in the new city, and even now votes absentee.....he is working in the financial district of New York, but calls Indian Wells "home."

Barbara, affectionately known as "BJ" to her friends, later taught at George Washington School in Palm Desert. She retired after thirty-three years.

Prior to the sale of the ranch, Dan's family built Desert Air Hotel and Air Park. The hotel grew to 56 rooms and two 3,600 foot lighted turf runways serviced the air traffic; the bar and restaurant, seating 80, were advertised as "fly in - drive in." Many locals and celebrities did just that. Dan managed the airport and represented the family in all developments of the property until it was sold in 1968.

Up until 1990 Dan was active in real estate sales and is now semi-retired. During these years, he became a Charter Member of the Historical Society of Palm Desert and served as President from 1988 to 1992. Now he is installed again as President in 1998. Other activities include co-chairing with BJ the Mini-Muster Program (see page 5.)

Dan is a Charter Member of the Indio Junior Chamber of Commerce; a Founding Member of the Palm Desert Junior Chamber of Commerce; a member of the Committee to Bring California Angels to Palm Springs for Spring Training; a member of the Advisory Committee for the Riverside County Airport Commission; a twelve year member of the Palm Desert Rotary Club, where he was active in assignments dealing with youth and scouting activities and also Cub Scout Master in Palm Desert. For many years Dan was involved with the University Extension Service in Grape and Turf Programs; he was Block Captain for the Disaster Preparedness Indian Wells City Program; and in 1997-98 worked with the City of Indian Wells securing and identifying photos for their "Wall of History." Recently, he was appointed to the Riverside County Archives Commission, which was established by the County Board of Supervisors in 1997.

Did you know that Rotary was started by a Chicago lawyer named Paul Harris in February of 1905? He wanted to kindle fellowship among members of the business community, so he asked three friends, and others joined them as they continued to meet, rotating from one member's business to another each time.....hence, the name 'Rotary.' By the end of 1905, the club had 30 members. The second club was formed in San Francisco in 1908. The name Rotary International was adopted in 1922. - from Desert Breeze, 10-27-98



Photo by Corinne Pivar

LINKING HISTORY TO THE FUTURE....THE CHILDREN BENEFIT

In addition to maintaining collections and archives, the third leg of our Society's educational mission is service to community. The stars were in alignment for this community outreach when in 1993 consultant, Jan Holmlund, brought word of a successful fire safety program being conducted for children in Arizona. Jan's granddaughter was excited about participating in such a program.

The concept of a Mini-Muster (see below) to be coordinated by the Historical Society of Palm Desert was presented to the Riverside County Fire Dept. and to the Desert Sands Unified School District. Both approved the idea. Thus, from the Old Fire Station, now Society headquarters, Mini-Muster was launched. It became the perfect vehicle for joining the Society's history to the future and to a positive, educational opportunity for children of the community.

Since then, under the capable leadership of BJ and Dan Callahan, six Mini-Musters have delighted over 2500 eight and nine year olds in Palm Desert. Valuable fire safety training drills have been offered to the Cove Community schools: Carter, Ford, Lincoln and Washington Charter. Support has been outstanding from Fire Station #33, also from staff and parents of the participating schools and from the City of Palm Desert.

BJ, Dan and Jan express high praise to all connected to the Mini-Muster program and sincere gratitude for those who have made it a great success. (e.g. McDonald's have supplied beverages each year for the 'cold drink stations' during field events.) At other stations Dan and BJ alternate in explaining the Mini-Muster art contest to each team. Winning pictures done by the children best illustrate how important Mini-Muster is to them.

Roger Keezer's wonderful photos have recorded six years of the event. He and Bruce Hagerman also drive the Society's 1960 fire truck to each school and give a talk about the workings of the old but well-kept and highly polished vehicle. The children sense and share the pride the Historical Society takes in its Fire Engine #1.

Mini-Muster welcomes T.V. and news reporters and interested visitors. This year, sponsors were pleased to have Palm Desert's Mayor Jean Benson and Indian Wells' Mayor protem Artie Henderson on hand to witness activities at some of the schools. In 1998 more volunteers joined the Mini-Muster committee. Jeanne Ahrens, Mary Noble, Bonnie Bowie and Ed & Adele Ruxton helped prepare the Certificates of Completion which are given to each 3rd grader. Also, they assisted at the schools during field events.

Post Script: Mini-Muster Recognition Evening was Oct. 22 in the Palm Desert City Council Chambers. Mayor Benson acknowledged the student artists and presented them with awards. Other awardees were: Riverside County Fire Dept., Desert Sand Unified School District and the Historical Society of Palm Desert. The Society gave the City of Palm Desert an award for promoting fire safety.



Muster - Webster

To assemble, to gather, to come together.

Muster - Fire fighters

To gather and perfect fire safety and fire fighting skills through training exercises and competitive events.

Mini-Muster - 8 & 9 year olds

Gather to learn fire safety and protection through competitive events set up and guided by Fire Fighters.

MINI-MUSTER, PALM DESERT

Since 1993, Fire Station #33 fire fighters providing and manning 13 field HANDS ON activities for the 3rd graders in elementary schools: Carter, Ford, Lincoln & Washington. The 4-hour field event program is followed by an Awards Assembly.

Mini-Muster 1998 - In its six years of operations, this program has given fire safety training to 2500 Palm Desert children. It is a first in Southern California and remains, to date, THE ONLY.

DONATIONS

Response to Mary Safe's request for issues of Desert Magazine was very good:

Madeline Hill = 408 copies

Robert & Wynema King = 165 copies

Shirley Stueve = 60 copies

Other Donations:

- Ginny Mullins continues to bring in items Ed had saved.
- Dr. Ed Stempler contributed maps and a financial report.
- Palm Springs Historical Society gave us info on artist Fred Penney.
- Mrs. J. O. Yungfleisch, a flier on date production & plant booklets from the 50's
- Millie Bird wrote a history of COD Friends of the Library and promises more items.
- Mrs. D. C. Pearson came up with a wonderful general history item from 1918.
- Bob Fraas sent us a portion of a personal letter from 1949 for our history category.
- Anita Carey submitted a box of great articles on various subjects from 70's & 80's.
- Velma Dawson is giving access to her personal files/invaluable historical knowledge.
- Joan Brooks, 670 copies of American Desert magazine

Needed: A well-preserved set of 1954 Desert Magazine (ours have all been water-logged.)

Palm Springs Villager & Palm Springs Life magazines from the 40's, 50's & 60's. Do you have any to donate? Or will you let us borrow yours for a short time?

RESIDENTS OF THE FORMER PALM DESERT PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Society is in possession of house plans for this area. This will be a program to benefit the community as soon as we have a chance to catalogue the blueprints and organize them so they will be accessible.

The Golf Cart Parade is a great mood setter for the season. Don't forget the 21st at the old fire station, the 22nd at Civic Center Park, and then Thanksgiving Joyous holidays to all! Keep the "attitude of gratitude" in your heart. See you, again, in 1999.

"Hourglass" Editor, Theda Lundquist

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